

# THE POLISH REVIEW

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Warsaw is a name that will live in the memory of mankind as long as honor and heroism are held in respect. Battered by a fierce 21-day artillery and air bombardment during the frightful siege of September 1939, Warsaw carried on under German occupation. It served as the seat of the Polish Underground State despite the fact that the Germans officially transferred the capital to Cracow. It was the heart and brain of all underground activity—sabotage, secret press and military action. And finally, it set a glorious example to the entire nation by its defiant and uncompromising attitude in its daily dealings with the goosestepping Nazis.

Then came the greatest sacrifice of all—the holocaust of the Warsaw Uprising, which started on August 1, 1944, and which ended 63 days later in the complete destruction of the once proud Polish capital, in the death of 250,000 men, women and children and in a hell on earth for another quarter of a million defenders driven from one concentration camp to another.

It was an all-out fight and though the help that had been promised never materialized, the forces of the underground Polish Home Army, backed by civilians of all ages, gave a magnificent account of themselves. Pictured above are several soldiers of the Home Army as they appeared in the early stage of the Uprising. Reflected in their haggard faces are the sleepless nights and the despair of a futile resistance that were the lot of all its participants. All classes of the population took part in the Warsaw Uprising and the women played a particularly valiant and invaluable role, performing in addition to the traditional tasks of womanhood, front line duty shoulder to shoulder with their men.



# The Polish Home Army Was Not Anti-Semitic

by General Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski

IN recent days, newspapers reported an influx into Berlin of Jews fleeing from Poland. Unfortunately, the Berlin correspondents of these newspapers failed to mention the fact that in addition to Jews, other refugees were also escaping into the Western occupation zones of Germany and that these refugees include all nationalities inhabiting Central Eastern Europe. The flight of the Jews is ascribed by some correspondents to alleged terroristic acts of the Polish Home Army. It must be remembered that after the Germans were driven out of Poland, the Polish Home Army was dissolved by order of its commander-in-chief and that in view of this, the attributing of anti-Semitic acts to an organization called the Home Army is groundless.

As former commander-in-chief of the Polish Home Army, I feel it my duty to protest emphatically against such irresponsible statements which are in glaring contradiction with the truth and which cause great moral harm to the participants in the underground fight with the Nazi invaders and to the thousands who fell in that battle.

The Home Army which I had the honor to command was recruited from all strata of Polish society, all political parties and all occupational and social groups. Nor were Jews missing among them. In its fight against Hitlerism the Home Army also fought against Hitlerite methods. In our daily underground press we fought most energetically not only against the inhuman mass murder of Jews by the German invader but also against anti-Semitism in general, which we regarded as one of the symptoms of modern barbarism. Proofs of this attitude of the Home Army toward the fate of Jews in Poland and toward anti-Semitism are preserved in copies of the underground military press which have been smuggled abroad by couriers at the risk of their life.

The Polish Home Army did not limit itself to words alone. During the tragic days when the ghettos were being liquidated at the order of my predecessor, General Grot-Rowecki, who was arrested by the Germans in July 1943, contact was established with the Jewish Militant Organization, which was formed at that time. From our meager stores of arms and ammunition, we granted assistance to the Jewish defenders of the ghetto in Warsaw, Bialystok, Czestochowa and Kielce. Simultaneously, an agreement was reached concerning cooperation between the Home Army and the Jewish Militant Organization with respect to the defense of the ghetto. In this defense many soldiers of the Polish Home Army lost their lives. One of the Jewish defenders of the ghetto who distinguished himself by his remarkable courage and heroism received the highest Polish military decoration, the "Virtuti Militari," from General Grot-Rowecki.

At my command, the soldiers of the Home Army carried out death sentences not only against the assassins and agents of the Gestapo but also against a number of persecutors of Jews regardless of nationality. These sentences were made public over my signature in the official underground newspaper of the Home Army—the "Biuletyn Informacyjny."

The great majority of those Jews who succeeded in escaping death at German hands owe their lives to the Polish population, who sheltered them paying for it with their freedom and at times with their own lives and the lives of their dear ones. During the Warsaw Insurrection the few members of the Jewish Militant Organization who were still alive, appealed to their brethren in our newspapers, exhorting them to take part in the battles in the ranks of the Home Army. In these battles also participated Jews from Greece, Rumania, Hungary, France, Belgium and the Netherlands who had been liberated by detachments of the Home Army from the concentration camp located in the ruins of the ghetto. In this manner the unity of ideals for which the Poles and Jews fought the Germans was once again demonstrated.

We therefore ask with great sorrow what purpose can be served at the present time by newspaper campaigns whose only result can be the spreading of hate and antagonism among nations which until recently had been united so strongly by common battle, common aims and blood shed in common.

# UNITED NATIONS PRIMER\*

by SIGRID ARNE

## THE ATLANTIC CHARTER AND POLAND

POINTS Two and Three of the Atlantic Charter read as follows:

"Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned:

"Third, they respect the rights of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live."

Point Two told all Europe that the United States and the United Kingdom were saying, "You can have your countries back. You Dutch can be world famous again for tulips. You French can set world styles. You Belgians can again turn out your heirloom lace for the world's brides. You Poles, with only twenty years of independence behind you, can try again."

More importantly, it said to the thoughtful men of the Continent, "You can run your own schools, teach your own history, talk your own language, sing your own songs, revere your own heroes."

It is said to the nervous small nations which, as yet, hadn't been invaded—Turkey, Iran, the countries of Latin America, "If the war rolls over you too, we'll see that you have another chance."

Point Three made the promise even stronger. It said that after the war the nations could look forward to genuine "peoples' elections" as England and the United States understand elections. It seemed to promise that, whatever great powers came out of the war, if the United States and the United Kingdom were on top they would not dictate living conditions to the small powers. To various sections of the European underground, catching the ideas from short-wave radio, it meant at least a chance to vote out of office the weak, the shortsighted, and the downright venal national leaders who had permitted them to slide into the war.

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The Trap

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The United States and the United Kingdom came a half-cropper on that provision when the third ally, the U.S.S.R., had joined them, and finally—three and a half years later—Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin, in January, 1945, met at Yalta to plot postwar Europe.

The United States and the United Kingdom agreed there to the U.S.S.R.'s desire for the possession of a goodly eastern slice of Poland. What about the five and a half million Poles in that area? What about their right to "no territorial changes that did not accord with their freely expressed wishes"?

Shortly, Churchill suggested to the British Parliament that it should offer British haven and citizenship to whatever men in the Polish army might desire it.

The problem promises to continue down the years. But Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, of Michigan, after he had been named as one of the United States delegates to the San Francisco conference, announced that he would offer provisions under which political decisions (such as the cutting up of Poland) made during the war could come up for review once the world organization had jelled.

But there was cold turkey to consider at Yalta where Churchill and Roosevelt (against their announced principles) had to agree to Stalin's desires. Both the United States and the United Kingdom foreign ministries knew definitely that it would be years before Russia could forget her bitter losses at Leningrad, in the siege of Moscow, at Stalingrad—and her twenty-five years of fear that the capitalist West might one day invade her Communist borders. The Russians wanted then, and they wanted as the war drew to a close, the assurance that any future attack would take place much farther west of their great cities. They wanted a sort of no man's land as a buffer area. And they had the armies to hold that area.

The only alternative for the United States and the United Kingdom was most probably: a quick shift from World War II to World War III. It could have happened somewhere in mid-Germany, when the armies of the West and East met. They would then have wiped out the German war machine, but suddenly the Russian guns could have been trained on United States and United Kingdom troops, and United States and United Kingdom guns could have replied. How long that war would have lasted, and who would have won, was a gamble.

At that point in Washington arguments, the most violent critics of the Yalta compromise on Poland went no further. They had no answer, and those of them old enough to have children in the armies of the West looked uncertain about a future that might mean a continued war between the erstwhile Allies.

The grapevine State Department hope, however, got around: that all questions of boundaries will eventually be open to review when the international organization has proved itself strong enough to stop wars. The U.S.S.R. has little economic advantage to gain from the eastern part of Poland. It is merely a military buffer. But Russia, whose Litvinov fought so hard to stiffen the League of Nations, proved herself determined in World War II to have a strong successor to the League. This was the back-room understanding in Washington even among the conservatives.

And this is as good a place as any to put a sort of intellectual leg iron on the average, hasty, generous, read-as-you-run American.

\*From *United Nations Primer* by Sigrid Arne, New York and Toronto, Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1945, 156 pp. \$1.25. Copyright, 1945 by Sigrid Arne.

He jumps to conclusions which are dangerous. Even commentators who should know better fell to discussing the Atlantic Charter after August, 1941, as if it were a fait accompli. This and that would happen, they said. Didn't the Charter say so? Because of them the public was lulled into an "everything's going to be all right" state.

But they hadn't read the Charter carefully. Nor did they consider the political conditions behind Roosevelt and Churchill when they wrote the Charter.

Both men were tethered to the leash of public opinion in their countries. They could go no further than elections would permit, nor any further than they could foresee that future elections would take their nations when they were no longer in office. Foreign policy has to be determined on a little more permanent basis than an annual appropriations bill.

Roosevelt and Churchill guessed rather well on majority opinion, because the Charter was warmly received on both sides of the ocean. But they had made a bad guess—in Point Two—on the degree of the U.S.S.R.'s fears, and they had to compromise on Poland.

The post-Yalta hope is that the U.S.S.R. will finally learn that the United States and the United Kingdom only want to stay at home, drive their new automobiles, set out their primroses, and buy and sell like the confirmed traders they are, with the hope of seeing a roast of beef or a chicken on every Sunday dinner table.

The further hope is that the U.S.S.R. also wants just that, a little music, some dancing, a dash of vodka, more automobiles, better clothes, and better homes. But only the years will tell, and it was the only gamble Roosevelt and Churchill could take at Yalta.

There is also a need for the read-and-run American to study the actual words of United Nations declarations more carefully, since many such are expected in the future. The Atlantic Charter is as good a lesson as any.

### YALTA AND POLAND

The most explosive section of the Yalta agreements dealt with Poland. As the three nations began to work out that section the debate became so heated that it seemed on the verge of blowing up the San Francisco conference.

The agreement must be considered in the light of the long battle of statements, via press and radio, which had gone on between the old exile Polish government in London, and the "Lublin" or "Warsaw" Poles whom Moscow was backing, and which moved into the homeland as the Russian armies moved west into Germany.

The fact that Russia, without consulting with the United States and the United Kingdom, moved her chosen Poles into Warsaw revived fears that Russia would dictate to all the countries she had liberated; that in Poland she would set up a Moscow-chosen government, and thereby deny the Polish people the right to set up their own government.

The action was doubly disturbing in London and Washington because both capitals had had plenty of evidence during the war years that the London Poles had very close working ties with the Polish Underground—so close that the contents of Polish underground papers could be read the next day in New York; so close that Polish underground leaders shuttled back and forth, via small stratosphere planes, from Warsaw to London, even during the German occupation.

The feeling was that, if the London Poles had so close a tie with the underground, they should have a part in rebuilding the government.

The Yalta agreements said, in effect, that Poland should have a fusion government, set up with the aid of the Big Three, (Please turn to page 15)



# An American Lieutenant Colonel Tells What He Saw in Poland

**L**IEUTENANT COLONEL HENRY SZYMANSKI, West Point graduate and career officer, who spent more than three years overseas in the Near East, in Italy and in Western Europe, where he was attached to General Eisenhower's headquarters, has also spent some time in Poland, before coming to the United States for a brief leave in his home town of Evanston, Illinois.

On his way home, he made a report of his observations to the U. S. War Department and granted an interview to the United Polish Press in Washington regarding what he saw in Poland.

"I went to Poland in a round-about way by car," he said, "across Czechoslovakia to Zgorzelice, Silesia, where there is a temporary camp for civilians repatriated to Poland from our occupation zone in Germany. I stopped in Prague where I was struck by the same thing I later saw in all Poland and chiefly in Silesia: The Russians are removing everything of value. Factories are being stripped bare of machinery, agriculture is being deprived of livestock and agricultural implements. I was able to observe that in Czechoslovakia industry is not being denuded on the same scale as in Poland, but that the Russians are shipping food from Czechoslovakia in the same wholesale manner as from Poland. In Prague we had to subsist on our army rations because it was impossible to get anything.

"The Russians," continued Col. Szymanski, "feel at home in the entire occupation zone. They regard themselves as absolute masters. But I learned through experience that an attitude of submission and courtesy toward them brings no results. I found out that a sharp manner and American determination are much more fruitful. For example, riding along the highway toward Zgorzelice, I hit upon two Soviet convoys, carrying away loot and taking up the whole road. I could not pass and I was in a hurry. So I took off my revolver—I never approach the Russians armed," smiled Col. Szymanski, "and getting out of the car I told my chauffeur to keep me covered with his gun. Then I walked up to the Soviet lieutenant, who seemed to be the commanding officer of the convoy. Saluting, I introduced myself to him and asked him to make room for my car. The young Red officer eyed me suspiciously and asked me what would happen if he didn't. I didn't say a word. I merely turned toward my chauffeur who was sitting in the jeep with a tommy-gun trained in our direction and asked him in a loud voice, 'Got me covered?' The young fellow replied, 'Yes, sir!' and took a firmer hold of his gun. I looked at the Soviet lieutenant again. He had changed completely. His defiant air had left him; turning, he ordered the road cleared for me. I thanked him politely and it was a matter of minutes before I was continuing on my way. I had discovered the secret of success in diplomatic dealings with the Russians."

Col. Szymanski summarizes his impressions of his five week stay in Poland as follows: "The Poles hate the government imposed upon them. If the Red Army were to withdraw, they would get rid of the government overnight. I spoke with peasants in villages, with mountaineers in Zakopane, with women peddling apples and mushrooms among the ruins of Warsaw, with workers waiting for an opportunity to find employment in factories robbed of their machinery, with hotel chambermaids most of whom came from the villages, with road repairmen—and I can assert definitely that I spoke with the common people of Poland, with very many of them.



All that remains of Warsaw's main railroad station, completed just before the war.

I found the same desire throughout—to drive the Russians and their puppets out and to stop what they are doing to Poland. With disarming naiveté they asked me, 'Why don't you Americans come and occupy us? Why do you permit them to destroy and murder us? Hadn't you promised us liberation?' Flowers are thrown at every car flying the American flag. Their trust in us is heartbreaking.

"In the meantime, however," said Col. Szymanski, "Poland is in the firm grip of Soviet occupation. Zymierski's army is officered by Russians and only recently has there been talk of letting Poles in up to the rank of company and battalion commander. This means that at present even companies and battalions are commanded by Soviet officers. I had the opportunity to see this for myself. We were invited to lunch in Katowice by the governor of Silesia. His is a Polish name, Nawrocki, but he doesn't speak Polish. We had to converse through an interpreter. His closest aide is a colonel in a Polish uniform, but his name is the non-Polish Yeremyenko. I told Nawrocki I wished to visit Cracow because I and my American fellow-officers—several of them were of Polish descent—wanted to see the

ancient capital of Poland and particularly the Polish Westminster, the Wawel. Nawrocki agreed, but Yeremyenko protested energetically. 'No foreign officers are allowed in Cracow!' he announced sharply. 'Foreign?' I asked innocently. 'Aren't we Allies?' He was somewhat embarrassed and then suggested, 'Perhaps you would like to go there to see Archbishop Sapieha. If so, you needn't go to all that trouble because we can bring him here.' 'Oh, no, Colonel,' I replied, 'I'm a Catholic and a Catholic goes to his Arch-

bishop and not vice versa. And such a long way at that.'

"My reply did not seem to please Yeremyenko, who persisted, 'Why do you want to go to Cracow anyway?' To this I rejoined that I had heard that Poland was free and independent and I wanted to convince myself that as an Allied officer I was at liberty to travel in this free and independent country as a tourist. That's all. Whereupon I turned to my officers and asked them to get the cars ready. We went ahead and," Col. Szymanski laughingly added, "my methods of direct diplomacy had once again met with success."

Except for the bridges over the Vistula, Cracow has happily suffered little damage. Col. Szymanski's party visited the Wawel, the Royal Catacombs and the Church of Our Lady and was deeply moved by the relics of Poland's great past.

"When we were leaving the courtyard of the Royal Castle in Cracow," he narrated, "we noticed a military car driving in. A general and a lieutenant, both wearing Polish uniforms, stepped out. As is our American custom, I walked up to the general, saluted and introduced myself in Polish. Not a word of reply. He just stood there looking at me. I repeated my introduction explaining that that was our American custom. Again silence. Finally, the lieutenant slipped up from behind the general and said, 'I beg your pardon, but the General doesn't understand Polish.' I found the same thing was true wherever I turned in the 'Polish Army.' I might add that during the war I had seen too much of the real Polish Army to be mistaken. The one in Poland is not Polish."

Queried about security conditions in Poland, the Colonel said, "There is constant shooting at night everywhere. Who

(Please turn to page 13)



The heroes of the Warsaw Uprising of 1944 were buried in these makeshift graves in what was once a busy Warsaw thoroughfare.



The new migration: From East of the Curzon Line to a precarious life in Poland's new West.

RESOLUTION SUBMITTED TO THE U. S. SENATE BY SENATOR DAVID I. WALSH OF MASSACHUSETTS ON DECEMBER 20, 1945:

**W**HEREAS throughout centuries of struggle and sacrifice the people of Poland have established their unmistakable place in the family of nations and have demonstrated their capacity for self-government; and

**W**HEREAS Poland was one of our most faithful allies in the great conflict just ended, and fought courageously and gallantly to preserve ideals of democracy and liberty; and

**W**HEREAS conditions developing in Poland today, in the judgment of many, are threatening the sovereignty, self-determination, and autonomy of the Polish nation; and

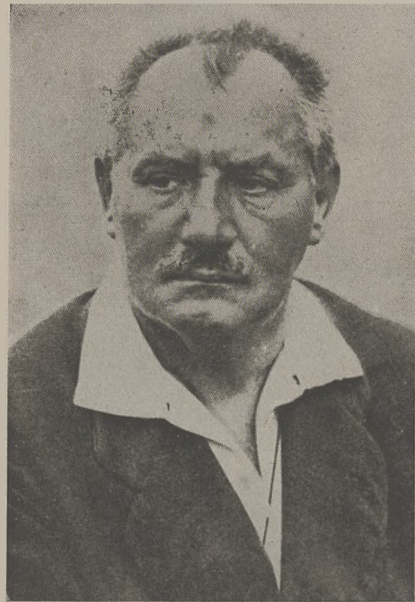
**W**HEREAS these conditions reflected in the United States and elsewhere bring into controversy the war aims of the United Nations and may possibly constitute infringement and denial of the basic freedoms for which the war was waged, thereby endangering permanent peace: Therefore be it

**RESOLVED BY THE SENATE (THE HOUSE CONCURRING),** That the Congress hereby extends deepest sympathy to the Polish nation and people for the hardships, trials, and sufferings they are sustaining and, mindful of our desire to promote freedom and self-determination among all the nations of the earth, both great and small, the Congress pledges its assistance and good offices to the Polish cause and to the cause of all other nations desiring and seeking freedom, and expresses the hope that the accredited diplomatic representatives of the United States may urge the justice of the Polish cause upon the United Nations and may move as speedily as possible to arrange for the negotiation of permanent treaties of peace, which will insure autonomy, freedom, and democratic institutions to Poland and all other nations aspiring to these basic rights.



# KASPROWICZ — THE POET OF THE SOIL (1865-1926)

by K. STYWIARSKI



Jan Kasprowicz.

UNDER the impulse of political and humanitarian motives, Polish literature devoted much attention to the peasantry. Peasant subjects were canvassed in every possible way. Poets, writers and artists often looked for inspiration to peasant art, crafts and songs. Nevertheless, the peasantry itself remained mute in spite of the ever-changing fashions of literature and art. Only one case, quite exceptional, showed there was talent in this peasant class, wasted to the great detriment of Polish

culture. Klemens Janicki lived in the sixteenth century and, thanks to the patronage of the Great, was given a careful education that developed his great talents. In fine Latin verse, he demonstrated the creative possibilities that slept in the souls of the peasants.

When serfdom was suppressed and schools were opened to peasant children, the first generation to receive the benefits of education abundantly proved the gifts of the tillers of the soil. Peasant political leaders appeared on the stage and their horizons were not limited to their villages, but embraced all fields of national and public life. Polish science gained a number of hardworking adepts, who brought from their native countryside a gift for empiric thinking and research. Polish art of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries owes much of its brilliance to peasant talent.

Young Kasprowicz was a member of this first Polish peasant generation to benefit from education and culture.

Kasprowicz's life, as the life of almost every peasant child who obeyed the call of higher aspirations, was hard and full of toil. He had to run daily from his native village of Szymborze to the school in Inowroclaw. Rain and mud of the autumn, snowstorms and cold of the winter made this daily feat almost impossible. The teaching in the alien German tongue and constant work on his father's farm certainly did not help Kasprowicz to overcome the difficulties so well described in Sienkiewicz's short story "The Memoirs of a Teacher in Poznanian."

Even in his early youth Kasprowicz attracted the attention of the Prussian authorities by his fiery patriotism, and was expelled from

## MY EVENING SONG

*Blessed be the moment  
When the soul's evening hymn breaks forth!  
When from the quiet fields,  
From the stubble and the river bank,  
The lanes and the fallow land,  
The low-lying huts  
And the weather-beaten barns,  
The song of a lad comes, crying:  
O play for me, little pipe!  
Play for me, play!  
I fashioned you from a willow branch,  
Where flows the silver-blue river,  
Where rises the murmuring grove.*

*Dew collects on the sleepy flowers,  
On the meadows and dark wheat fields.  
It rests on the lake's curving shore,  
Does the soul of this far-spreading land,  
And prayerfully stares in its depths.  
Then it rises with mist-clouds on high,  
O'er the silent, the praying waters.  
It listens, and looks, and whispers  
Perpetual prayers.  
From the hamlets flow sounds of talking,  
In the marshes the wild birds answer,  
And far in a lonely corner, at a crossroad,  
A single candle glimmers within some cottage.*

—JAN KASPROWICZ.

Translated by Charlotte Saikowska  
in *The Wayside Willow*.

school before concluding his studies. He wandered from school to school before in his twenty-third year, he obtained



Jan Kasprowicz among his beloved books. All woodwork and furniture is hand carved in authentic highlander style.

his School Certificate. Shortly afterward, he was sentenced to prison in Silesia for patriotic activities.

Kasprowicz left his village on the shore of Lake Goplo rich in experience and emotions. The grain he took with him was the result of patient work, deep ploughing and honest sowing. His native village and the surrounding landscape of the Goplo lake became the canvas on which he embroidered his gigantic pictures of human life. This native village also gave him his deep social impulses, his moral fervor, his burning faith, and his love of man and native country. In his work, mostly lyrical, Kasprowicz went through various phases of triumph and defeat but always remained faithful to the rugged tradition of tillers of the soil whose joys and cares are ever repeated in the recurring seasons of the year.

Kasprowicz is the poet of the soil. Despite many years spent in towns, in literary circles or among scientists when he was Professor of Literature at Lwow University and although his later years were taken up by the books he loved, and foreign literary chef d'oeuvres, which he translated, his work was always inspired by the memories of what he saw and felt in his native village.

The harsh dourness of those early days, an inborn pessimism, and the fervent passion of a soul seeking truth and justice formed the background of Kasprowicz's poetry, until in the maturity of old age he found peace in the majesty of the Tatra Mountains. The colors of his paintings became more peaceful and the storms of his spirit abated.

But in every phase of his creative work, every word Kasprowicz wrote conveyed meaning; he never used words for empty decorative effect. This has made Kasprowicz's style distinct and gives it a peasant quality different from the Baroque effects of many writers and poets of noble families. Kasprowicz expressed his integral patriotism that rose above declamation and ostentation, in his "Book of the Poor":

"It is only rarely that on my lips—may they confess it today—this dearest and blood-soaked word 'my country' appears. . . ."

This characteristic confession is the best formula of the deep meaning of peasant patriotism, and is a signpost for patriotic work in a reborn, democratic Poland. Kasprowicz is a deeply rooted poet of the soil, the source of his spiritual strength, of his faith in Poland and in victory over brute force.

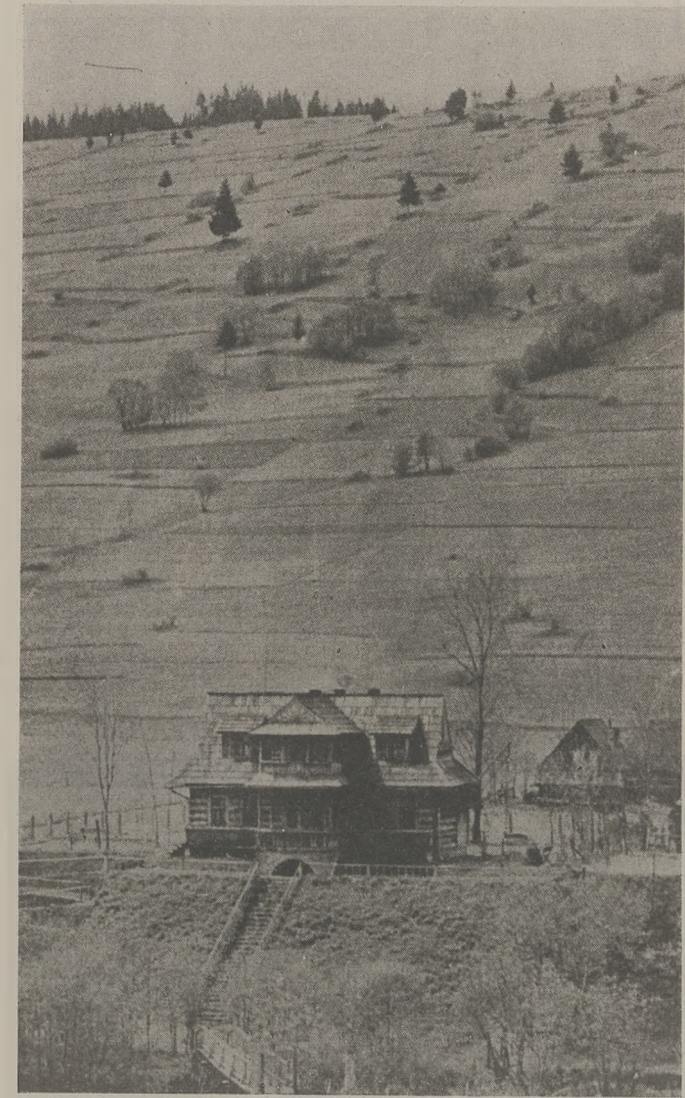
"There is deathless force in the people and salvation lies under their smock."

In these few words, the poet drew up a plan of action to bring about the restoration of Poland. In other lines, well suited to present times, Kasprowicz called upon the people to resist and fight, even in the most difficult circumstances:

"Blessed are they who in tempests remain calm of spirit, from whose hearts no word of despair comes at the sight of destruction and rubble, who in the shadow of the darkest night never lose their faith in the brightness of the morning sun, blessed are they."

Kasprowicz was sensitive to social injustice, felt deeply the wrongs inflicted upon Poland by the partitioning powers, and the sufferings of man on this desolate earth of ours. He gathered all these in his bosom, bathed them in his blood, rocked them with his breath and laid them before God in his powerful hymns.

These hymns are a magnificent symphony in which the soul of the poet soared from his Polish village on the shores of Lake Goplo to the whole country, to the whole of mankind, to the whole human world. Memories of church singing and supplications are reflected in these hymns, which became the deepest expression of the human soul in search of God, of faith and of justice. His apocalyptic strains, his sense of



"Harenda," the home of Jan Kasprowicz in the foothills of the Tatras.

a world on the brink of disaster and his pictures of the progress of mankind under the breath of death, is almost an anticipation of our own times when we hear the beating of the wings of Lucifer, the clash of iron and splash of blood.

In these hymns Kasprowicz's peasant soul rose to Promethian scope as he described his village and the church procession on the highway of man's perennial pilgrimage.

He started by blasphemy, rebellion and curses, but finally found a solution to human misery in a village church. He confessed all the sins of the world as a peasant would do at the bar of a confessional.

This sense of participation in sin and punishment forms the deeply religious background of Kasprowicz's poetry; it is a magnificent theme through which his soul feels bound to all earthly existence, responsible for all wrongs and the sins of all mankind.

The echoes of the shepherd's flute in "My Evening Song," rising against the terrific conflicts of his soul, striving to liberate itself from sin, forecast the evangelic bliss, which shines in his later works, "The Book of the Poor" and "My World."

After "The Quarrel with God," the poet found peace in  
(Please turn to page 14)



# WOMEN—THE INSPIRATION OF THE POLISH HOME\*

by DR. IRENA PIOTROWSKA

HER women are Poland's strength. How is it, that the visitor to our country, the land of brave and valiant men whose gallantry has for centuries defended its integrity and whose blood has flown freely in the defense of other liberty-loving nations, is primarily struck by the inner strength of the Polish women? Foreigners are probably most deeply impressed by certain peculiarities of Polish everyday life and customs that pass unnoticed by native people. Thus visitors from abroad, while searching for anything new and unusual, observe the important role played by women in the lives of the Polish people—a role which to us seems only natural. They see her taking part in social activities, they see her at home, performing the duties of housewife and hostess, and they realize that it is the woman in her role of mother, wife, and sister who is the pillar of Poland's national fortitude.

The self-effacement of the mother, the tender affection of the sister, the patriotism of wife or sweetheart who places the welfare of country and community above her own happiness, have always helped the Polish man to perform his valiant deeds, to endure the hardships of battle, and the long, exasperating years of political exile.

If we look to the past of the Polish nation, we easily understand the character of the Polish woman of today. She has always occupied an exceptional place in the life of the family.

\* Courtesy National Broadcasting Co., 1945 Summer Series, "Home Around the World."



*Death of a Polish Exile in Siberia.* Oil painting by Jacek Malczewski. Museum of the University of Notre Dame



*Polish Highlander Woman.* Woodcut by Tadeusz Kulisiewicz.

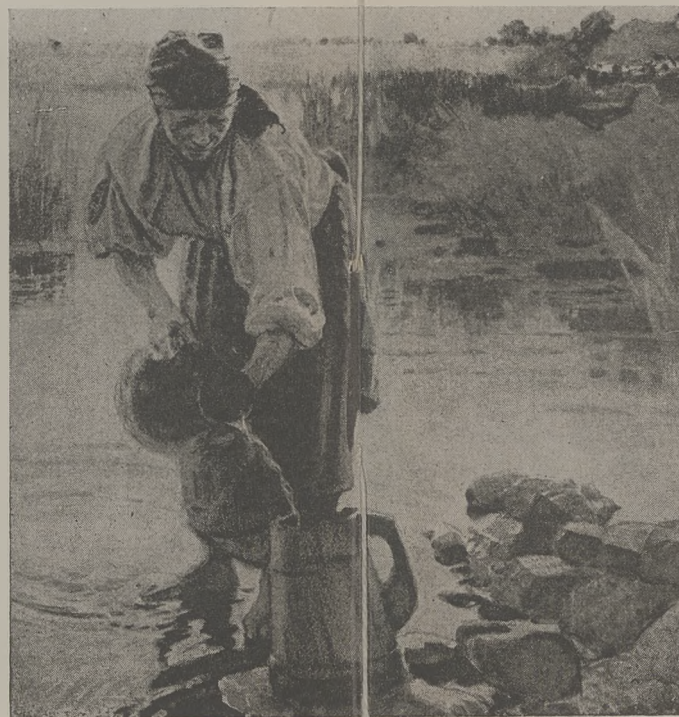
Small wonder that in Poland, always on the alert against aggression, the woman had to develop sturdy qualities. She had to be the stern head of the family during the long absence of her husband and brothers, loving and consoling during their short stay at home.

It is to the genius of Poland's nineteenth-century historical painter, Jan Matejko, that we owe the creation of the distinct type of Polish woman. While perfecting the aesthetic ideal of the Pole in general, Matejko also created that of the woman. Among the artist's many contributions to Polish art and culture, this achievement ought not to be overlooked. She appears either alone, as imaginative portraits of great Polish women of the past, and as portraits of the artist's wife and daughters; she also appears on his large historical canvases. Surrounded by hundreds of personages of historic importance, the woman has her place; she is not forgotten. She is seen fully apprehending the gravity of the historical event enacted before her eyes, often with a child in her arms or by her side, explaining to him what is happening.

A contemplative mood, almost inseparable from Matejko's human beings, also characterizes his women. Sentiment, the attribute of women in pictures by Matejko's precursors, rose in the hands of this great artist to the height of emotion.

The type of Polish woman created by Matejko has lived in Polish art ever since. But even more than Polish art, Matejko's pictures influenced the women themselves. While he captured on his canvases their truest value, he helped to perfect the type of the Polish woman as she appears in life. Poland's women have proved to be no less serious in reality than they are represented in the ideal sphere of art; they have been demonstrating every day in partitioned Poland, and every day in this war, that they are able to defend their convictions in a truly heroic manner.

The tragedy of the partitions of Poland in the closing years of the eighteenth century centered the attention and emotions of the Polish people upon their country more than ever before. The role of the woman as guardian of the Polish hearth grew to national importance. During the one hundred and twenty-three years of for-



*On the River.* Water color by Apoloniusz Kedzierski.



*Peasant Girls at Work.* Woodcut by Wladyslaw Skoczylas.

eign rule in Poland, she was the one who taught the Polish children to speak their prayer in Polish, to write and read in Polish, to know Poland's history and literature. In school, under the Tsarist Russian and German occupation they were not allowed to use their native tongue and there they never heard even one friendly word about their country. But when they returned from school, disheartened by its hostile atmosphere, they found in the home warmth, and encouragement. Their mother sang songs with them, preferably folk tunes or songs full of patriotic spirit, which each child knew by heart before school age and which later he remembered and cherished throughout all the years of his life. And the child found the words he sang illustrated in paintings, or their reproductions, hanging on the walls of his home, and showing Poland's glorious past, her heroic men and women, her fights for freedom, her customs and countryside.

In the greater part of partitioned Poland, museums were closed. It was in private homes that Polish art found refuge. Of all the arts, interior decoration and handicraft suffered least under hostile rule. Many Polish artists, for lack of large,

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## WOMEN—THE INSPIRATION OF THE POLISH HOME

(Continued from page 9)

official commissions, concentrated their abilities on interior decoration. They found a ready response among the Polish housewives who saw to it that the furniture and decoration of their home were Polish in character.

Women who could not afford to avail themselves of the services of professional artists decorated their homes themselves. To give their home a Polish atmosphere, they turned for inspiration to the peasant's hut, realizing that the traditional element naturally evinces itself most clearly in folk art, which is least exposed to alien influences and thus most faithfully clings to inherited age-old forms. Polish housewives have always covered their furniture with colorful weavings, with embroidered table cloths, freely drawing inspiration from the inexhaustible wealth of decorative motifs in peasant crafts. They taught their little daughters to develop their artistic taste through observation of folk handicrafts and thus to keep up the age-old traditions.

Polish women also found time, amidst their many home, educational, and civic activities, to make lace for all home linens. From the peasant women they learned never to copy, but always to create new designs and to avail themselves of the multiple patterns of flowers growing on Polish soil.

What joy and opportunity to promote love of home industry was offered by holiday festivals! Instead of hanging commercial ornaments on the Christmas tree, the Polish mothers instructed their children to prepare exquisite little hand-made paper toys, imitating peasant paper ornaments used during religious and folk festivals all over the country. And for Easter, children painted Easter eggs themselves, again in imitation of those made by the country people.

The most important holidays of the year served to keep the old ceremonies alive. To the Poles, the most solemn celebration of the year is the traditional supper eaten on Christmas Eve. Before this Christmas supper begins, the mother of the family breaks a consecrated wafer of unleavened wheat flour with each member of the household and her guests, to show that she is ready to share with them, if need be, even the last piece of bread. Polish women send such wafers to absent relatives and



*Homecoming of a Wounded Polish Insurrectionist, 1863.*  
Water color by Artur Grottger.

friends, and have always in the past, as at present, sent them to political prisoners and prisoners of war, whenever possible.

It is surprising that with all the work at home, the women in subdued Poland had time to attend to many civic duties, and to take part, as artists, writers and scientists, in the development of Polish nineteenth-century culture. Let us not forget that the world's most famous woman scientist grew up in Poland and that it was in Warsaw that her first yearning for scientific research was born.

But the real accomplishment of Polish women in science and letters came about after Poland had regained her independence in 1918. Their scientific and artistic creativeness increased considerably. In the field of letters, the number of Polish women of renown almost equaled that of men. One of the modern Polish novels written by women, *Blessed Are the Meek* by Zofia Kossak, has recently become a best-seller in this country. Still, the women of independent Poland did not, by any means, neglect their family duties. And the woman's part in family life was fully appreciated by free Poland, as is proved, for instance, by the fact that Polish social legislation concerned with the protection of woman went far beyond similar legislation in other modern countries.

The women themselves, whatever their activities outside their homelife, never forgot that their chief duties were toward their home and children. And they must have done these duties well, since the younger generation of women, who faced the ruthless invasion of the Germans and suffered 5½ years under the Nazi yoke, proved themselves worthy

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*Mrs. Regina Ruziewicz Collection*

*Will He Come Back? 1863.* Oil painting by Jozef Szermentowski.



# HEL—THE FIRST BATAAN OF WORLD WAR II

**J**UTTING out in a narrow strip of sandy land into the Baltic is the 24 mile-long peninsula of Hel. This stretch of barren soil was the scene of an epic resistance to the Germans in September 1939 that rivalled the great defense sagas of history for sheer doggedness, fury and heroism.

The peninsula's forces numbered two battalions of marines and various loose groups bringing the total up to 2,000 men. Its defenses consisted of one battery of 155mm. coastal artillery, two anti-aircraft 75mm. batteries, two 100mm. land cannon, a number of machine guns, plus a few light navy vessels.

Massed against this ridiculously small array of equipment was the concentrated might of two German battleships (each equipped with 16 280mm. cannon and about 30 100-150mm. cannon), some fifty batteries of land artillery, and the powerful German air force.

And yet, despite the crushing superiority of German equipment and manpower, Hel held out for the fantastic total of 32 days, capitulating on October 3, 1939, when the defenders ran out of ammunition.

How was this defense possible? How could the lightly armed, outnumbered Poles resist continuous land and air bombardment for so many days and nights? Very little has been written to date about

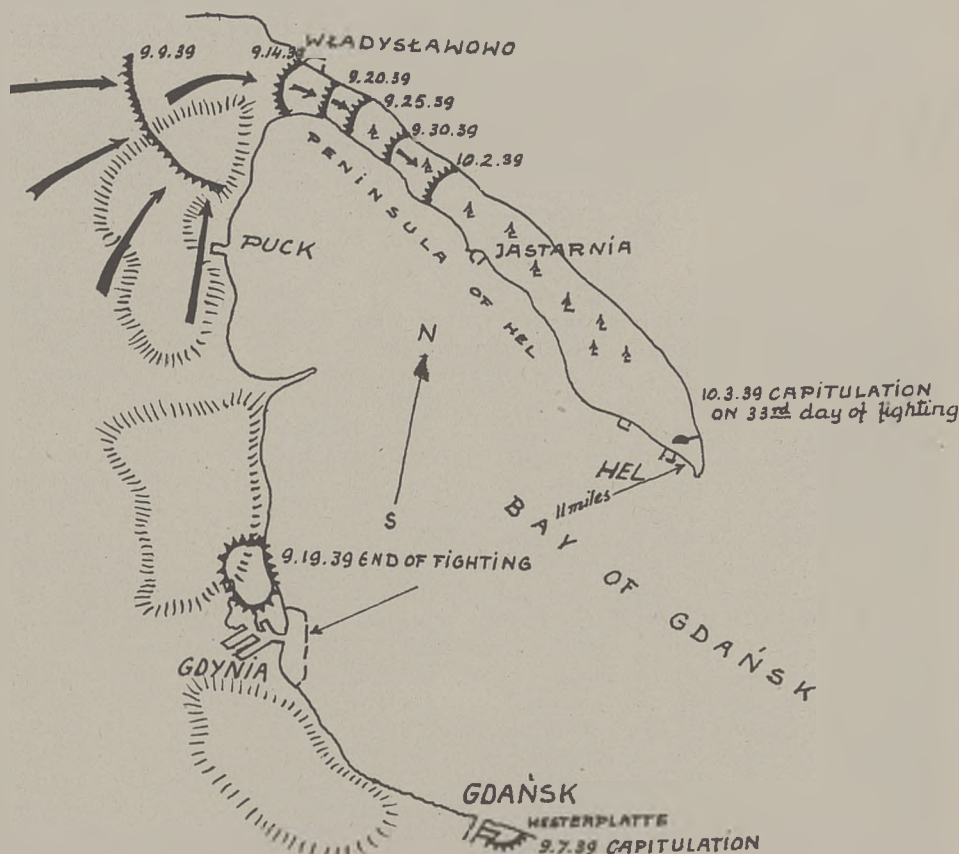
the story of Hel for the excellent reason that like the heroes of Bataan and Corregidor, virtually all of the survivors of that defense have spent 5½ years in brutal captivity.

The following account is based on the story told to *THE POLISH REVIEW* by Adam Wichura, a participant in that memorable month of fighting.

The pre-war Polish authorities had hoped to discourage a German attack on Poland by playing up the impregnability of the defenses on Hel. To be sure, work on the fortifications had been begun, but despite the feverish activity, it was not very far advanced at the time of the German invasion. In the belief that Hel was indeed a heavily fortified outpost, the Germans let loose a storm of fire against the peninsula on the very first day of the war. For more than a week Hel was the target of a withering bombardment from the air and the sea in a softening up operation preparatory to a land attack. Throughout all this time and up to the very moment of capitulation Hel did not have a single fighter plane or bomber with which to fight back. The thirteen two-seater training planes that had flown to the tip of the peninsula from near-by Puck on the first day of the war to serve as liaison ships, were destroyed on the ground on the third day of aerial attack.

The sole anti-aircraft defense against the Heinkels, Junkers and Messerschmidts swarming overhead were, in addition to the regular two batteries, thirteen makeshift guns removed from the training planes. Set up without the essential base in the sparsely wooded sections of the peninsula, their one-man crews achieved wonders of ingenuity and damage. In desperation, other Poles shot at the planes from sub-machine guns and pistols.

By September 9 the German land forces moved up to the base of the peninsula at Wielka Wies and launched a direct attack backed by a hurricane of artillery fire. Following the liquidation of the stronghold of Westerplatte on September



Map showing the phases of the fight for the peninsula of Hel from September 9, 1939 to October 3, 1939.

7 and of Oksywie on September 19, all German efforts were directed against Hel, which dominated the Bay of Danzig and blocked the entrance to the ports on that Bay.

Still, despite the fury of the combined German land, sea and air onslaught, Hel managed to hold out. Several factors conspired to make the impossible possible. Because of its long and fairly narrow shape, the peninsula lent itself to the construction of field fortifications. Ditches and sand traps were built, barriers of torn up rails and felled trees erected, and barbed wire entanglements set up every few yards.

During a blistering attack by German infantry, the defending Poles would withdraw to a second position and once the violence of the attack was spent, come back to their original position, from which they engineered counterattacks.

This delaying action on a long and narrow peninsula was a strategy evolved by the Polish commanders to make up for the absence of Polish artillery and air force.

With their limited equipment, the Poles worked miracles. "The Germans did not know how many guns we had," says Mr. Wichura. "We used our few guns to excellent advantage. Each cannon frequently changed position. By giving short but strong salvos from each new position and by camouflaging our guns to perfection, we fooled the Germans into thinking the peninsula bristled with them. When the Germans finally marched in, they scoured Hel for cannon of a caliber and type we had never even had."

In addition to this strategy of land fighting the Poles also organized a naval defense. The four cannon at the tip of Hel constantly changed position and engaged in long artillery duels with the German battleships, cruisers and destroyers anchored in the Baltic. Their deadly aim inflicted heavy losses upon the enemy. Armed Polish pleasure craft, mostly motor launches, carried out night raids on the German airport at Puck, while Polish trawlers attacked from

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# POLISH ORPHANS IN NEW ZEALAND

by BETTY UPTON HUGHES

WHEN the people of New Zealand invited to their land Polish children who had gone through the horrors of war in Poland and deportation to Soviet Russia, they decided to do everything in their power to make their small guests feel at home. Soon after the arrival of the Polish youngsters, I paid a visit to their camp near the city of Pahiatua.

No sooner did I enter through the gate than I had the impression I was in a different country. There were Polish flags everywhere and foreign speech resounded on all sides. Sprawling over an area of seven acres are airy buildings provided with dormitories, dining rooms, more than twenty classrooms, a recreation hall, a library, a chapel, a hospital, showers, and kitchens. Small one-family houses are available for those lucky children who arrived with their parents. But such children are exceptions. The overwhelming majority are orphans whose parents died in Russia.

The camp is under the joint supervision of Major Foxley of the New Zealand Army, Mr. J. Sledzinski, delegate of the Polish Ministry of Social Welfare, and the representative of the New Zealand Citizens' committee organized in Wellington by the wife of New Zealand's Prime Minister. The latter Committee cares for the youthful Polish visitors, organizes clothing and toy collection drives, and arranges for theatrical performances, concerts and parties with the local children.

Food is provided by the New Zealand Army and is cooked by soldiers. The administration, headed by Captain Forsythe, who is chief quartermaster, is also in the hands of the Army. Nevertheless, life in the camp is completely devoid of military discipline to approximate as closely as possible the conditions of a normal home life.

By creating this type of an organization, New Zealand received its visitors with greater cordiality than did any other country. Elsewhere, the Poles are required to purchase whatever they need. Here, they receive everything free of charge. Several New Zealand volunteers who applied for work in the camp distribute from time to time toys, sweets, and books to the children and help the physician by checking their weight and height.

These children arrived from Russia in a lamentable state. Practically all were suffering from malaria or scurvy. At

present, the state of their health is quite satisfactory. Their childish faces are pink and round, and carefree joy shines in their eyes with increasing frequency. Clothing still presents a problem as these children rapidly grow out of their shoes or gain weight and become too big for their clothes. However, there is an abundant stream of gifts of all description from the hospitable hosts. For the New Zealanders whose sacrifices in the war effort were by no means small, sympathize with the Polish orphans and try to sweeten their sad childhood as much as they can. And so, in addition to such practical gifts as clothing, the camp in Pahiatua also receives packages with playthings, books and candy. One mother who lost her son in the war sent all his books to the camp. A child whose father, a soldier in the New Zealand Army, was taken prisoner, presented all his toys to his Polish friends.

During the few days which I spent among the Polish children in Pahiatua, watching them in the classroom, taking part in their games, sharing their meals or chatting in their rooms, I had an opportunity to become acquainted with their characters and interests, their emotions, longings and joys. I witnessed the indescribable happiness at receiving a toy, perhaps the first in the life of that child, or the touching need of a kind word and a mother's goodnight kiss.

Older children with whom I spoke told me of their distressing experiences in Russian exile, where they had had to work in the tundras felling trees or floating logs down the river. They related how their loved ones had starved to death, how they had had to work when the temperature was many degrees below zero.

The narrative of thirteen-year-old Jadzia, who lay in the snow several hours after having been pinned down by a tree while felling birches, or the pitiful story of little Tadek who lost his parents and siblings in Russia, are not propaganda but the grim truth described in simple sincere words by children eager to forget their tragic past. Here in New Zealand they are slowly regaining their innate sunniness, spending whatever time is left over from their studies in games and recreation.

A day in the camp is as follows: reveille at 6:30. The children make their own beds and then go to early mass. After breakfast, there are gymnastics and sports from 7:30 to 9. Classroom instruction is broken by an hour and a half for lunch. Supper is served at 5:30. The younger children go to bed at 8:30 while the older ones stay up until 9 or 9:30. In the time free from classroom activities or homework they play basket-ball, organize hikes to the nearby hills, swim in the river, play ping-pong, sing or produce their own amateur theatricals in the recreation room. There is also a scout team. In addition to their studies, and English lessons required for all, the older girls are taught designing, sewing and cooking. Each is obliged to spend at least one day a week at practice in the kitchen.

The camp is also provided with a movie and has a library stocked with Polish and English books. The youngsters are especially fond of *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Jungle Books*. For the small fry, there is a specially equipped playground and the camp commandant, Major Foxley, promises a swimming pool for the near future.

In Pahiatua out of a total 845 Poles  
(Please turn to page 13)



In the quiet New Zealand countryside, Polish children are forgetting their recent hardships in Russia.



## Polish American Artist Wins S. J. Wallace Truman Prize

**S**IGMUND KOZLOW'S *Under the Willows* has recently won the \$300 S. J. Wallace Truman Prize "for a landscape painting by an artist under 35 years of age" at the 120th annual exhibition of the National Academy of Design in New York. This canvas, which the *Art News* describes as "pleasantly warm and direct," was recently on display at the Academy along with 188 other paintings and 43 pieces of sculpture.

Sigmund Kozlow is a young Polish American artist who has received an impressive number of scholarships and awards, including a \$1,500 Pulitzer scholarship, since he first started exhibiting some ten years ago.



### Polish Orphans in New Zealand

*(Continued from page 12)*

there are only 112 adults; 35 teachers, a physician, a dentist, a few handymen, social workers, an interpreter, and parents. The remainder are children, mostly of pre-school age. There are 425 girls and 308 boys. The older boys have left for Junak schools. All adults except teachers, handymen, the physician and laundry women, who are fully occupied in their fields, have definite assignments. Each woman has the duty of caring for 25 children. She keeps their clothing clean and mended, sees that their closets with books and toys are kept in order, supervises their homework, and in general, tries to be a mother to these orphans. Adult men at the camp are old or incapacitated, unfit for military duty. They work at trades, care for the flowers, and work in the vegetable gardens.

Although the children are learning English with great earnestness, they have not yet mastered it sufficiently to speak fluently with the local population. But gestures and a smile can say very much. The New Zealanders have grown to love their small guests, who reciprocate their sincerity.

### An American Lieutenant Colonel Tells What He Saw in Poland

*(Continued from page 5)*

shoots? God alone knows. I suppose everybody, because everyone has arms, but the Red soldiers have most of them. And in addition to the Red Army there is the militia, the NKVD, special detachments etc. According to our estimates and observations, the Red Army of occupation in Poland numbers some 2,500,000. It is easier to feed them in Poland. Besides, these soldiers have seen, even among the simple folk, so many things about which they had not even dreamt in Russia that Stalin is not anxious to have them back too soon. They might spread the news that their country is not the paradise it is cracked up to be.

"This is the reason, I think, why the Soviets keep an army of a million and a half in Austria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, over 21 divisions in Bulgaria and so forth."



# THE TRAP

by ALEXANDER JANTA

AS a war correspondent, despite the grimness of war itself, you come across a strange story every now and then. About the funniest I ever heard was told to me during my recent trip to Holland.

It seems that the commanding general of the British 49th had asked the commanding officer of a Polish armored brigade to come to his headquarters for a discussion of the details of an attack, scheduled for the following day and to be executed jointly by the British and Polish troops.

The parley over, the British general suggested that they inspect the area from which the attack was to be launched. They climbed into a jeep, the general gave the command, and off they went, both following their progress on their own cellophane charts which, according to custom, were superimposed upon a detailed map of the region.

At the front line, the British general ordered a halt.

"From here we'll walk," he said stiffly. And he suited the action to the word by striding off at a brisk pace, eyes glued to his cellophane chart and map. The Polish colonel followed, his eyes glued to his own map.

They had passed the forward posts and were headed toward a wood when the colonel made an interesting and uncomfortable discovery. Foggy afternoon or not, it was plain that they were approaching the German lines. He shot a quizzical glance at the British general. If the latter felt any qualms his face gave no indication of his feelings.

"What courage! What disdain for the enemy!" thought the colonel. "Marvelous people, the British." And, eager to demonstrate that a Pole is as devil-may-care as the next person, he drew up alongside and engaged his superior in casual talk about the coming attack. For an hour they walked back and forth in the clearing, rehearsing their plan and picking up such loose ends as which Polish regiment would reinforce which British regiment, at what point, and at what time, at the end of which interval. Once these points were settled, the general suggested that they start back.

As they reached the front lines, they were greeted by a smiling British major who saluted his chief a little more enthusiastically than regulations demand.

"You had us on pins and needles, Sir, but I had a company

ready to extricate you from any trouble if the Jerries moved," he said, obviously relieved.

The general looked a trifle bewildered. "What trouble? What in blazes are you talking about anyhow, Major?"

"Well, Sir," the major replied. "You were walking through the German lines and under the circumstances . . ."

The general gulped, came to with a start that shook his substantial frame. "The German lines, did you say?" he repeated.

"Why yes, General," the brigadier said chuckling. "Didn't you know?"

"It was my impression," the general said stiffly, "that we were inspecting our front lines. At least, that's what the map says."

"Not MY map," interjected the colonel.

"Then why didn't you say something?"

"When one's senior officer leads, one follows, Sir," the colonel replied. "Would you care to compare maps?"

Quickly maps were compared and the discovery promptly made that in drawing the battle plan either the cellophane had slid across the map or the map had slipped under the cellophane—a matter of a tenth of an inch—so that on the general's map the front line appeared to be a quarter of a mile further north than it was on the brigadier's map. The general himself made the discovery and his was the loudest guffaw.

"I wonder what the Jerries thought, seeing us promenading back and forth right under their noses," the general remarked, shaking his head.

"They must have thought it was some kind of trap," the brigadier replied, smiling. "Either that or they were momentarily stunned by our . . . shall I say . . . impudence."

Whatever it was, when the attack was launched the following day, the Germans offered ferocious and bloody resistance. They were driven back, but it wasn't easy. The toughest nut to crack was a well-camouflaged machine gun that a suicide squad kept firing to the bitter end from an emplacement 200 yards from the spot where a couple of allied commanders had leisurely walked back and forth discussing plans for the coming attack.

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## KASPROWICZ—THE POET OF THE SOIL (1865-1926)

*(Continued from page 7)*

his hymns. This was the peace of clear skies after a storm, a peace achieved by suffering, pain, the torture of doubt.

The beauty of the Tatra landscape to which Kasprowicz became so attached in his old age is interwoven in his meditations, like those of St. Francis on man and life. As a lyrical poet Kasprowicz reached epic heights. His imagination dwelt on more peaceful horizons and he formed a hap-

pier idea of man, and from his last work, "My World," even humor is not lacking.

The characters of mountaineers that adorn his evangelical discourses could fill a great picture of the peasant world if he had had time to write it. It would have been far different from Reymont's "Peasants" and the novels of Orkan.

But fate decreed that Kasprowicz should enrich only Polish lyrics with the treasures of his peasant soul, that he should be one of the greatest of lyrical poets.

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## WOMEN—THE INSPIRATION OF THE POLISH HOME

*(Continued from page 10)*

of their most heroic predecessors. While Polish women drove ambulances during the campaign of 1939, worked in hospitals and carried ammunition, while they fought in the underground army side by side with men; while they distributed underground papers, smuggled food to large cities, gave instruction to children in secret schools, they knew that their most important task remained that of the guardian of the Polish home fire: to promote faith and impart spiritual strength to their husbands and brothers—whether at home, in prison, or in exile—to keep alive, within the seclusion of

the home, old Polish customs and traditions, to repeat the daily prayers with their little sons and daughters, to keep their hearts pure and loving, hopeful and patriotic, to give solace and consolation to all about them.

The spiritual strength of Polish women proved so great that whatever may yet befall Poland, whatever years of uncertainty and suffering are still before her, they will carry on, will remain the inspiration of the Polish home as they always have been, will instill hope into the hearts of whoever may be discouraged, until the bright sun of Freedom will shine again and all clouds of doubt will be dispersed forever.



## UNITED NATIONS PRIMER

*(Continued from page 3)*

and that it should include the Warsaw Poles and democratic Poles "both at home and abroad. "This new government was to be called the Polish provisional government. Then this group was to be pledged to hold "free and unfettered elections" on the basis of "universal suffrage and the secret ballot," exactly the election formula to which the United States subscribes for itself.

But there were four words in the Yalta agreement, over which there was so much misunderstanding that Poland still had no fusion government when the San Francisco conference met, and for the first time Poland failed to have a seat at a United Nations conference.

The four words were "in the first instance." The Yalta communique said that the Big Three commission which would help the Poles to reconstitute their government would consult "in the first instance in Moscow with members of the present provisional government, and with other Polish democratic leaders from within Poland and from abroad."

The argument arose over the interpretation of that phrase. The Russians interpreted it to mean that any Poles added to the government must be approved by the Warsaw Poles, and by Moscow. In the United States and the United Kingdom there was just a general feeling that Poland would get a new government by dint of dissolving the Warsaw Poles, and then somehow strike a balance between them and other Poles.

But as it actually began to work out, London and Washington would agree on a few Poles to propose to Moscow for the new government, and then the names would be either rejected or accepted. In other words, the Warsaw Poles had the last say. It wasn't the democratic type of action expected in the Western world, but the Russians argued that, after all, they had been promised that the present provisional government would be consulted "in the first instance."

The Yalta promises had an abrupt test at San Francisco, just three months later. Russia's Foreign Commissar V. M. Molotov proposed that the Warsaw Poles be seated. Both the United States and the United Kingdom objected that only representatives of a fusion government, such as had been promised, could be seated.

For days, there was fragmentary information to the press to the effect that Washington, London, and Moscow were trying to hurry acceptance of Poles outside the Warsaw government, so that fusion delegates could arrive at San Francisco in time to be seated.

Then suddenly, at a closed meeting of the Big Four foreign ministers, Molotov dropped a bombshell that ended any attempt to seat Poland: Russia had arrested sixteen underground Polish leaders who had been trying to confer with Moscow. He said they had been engaged in "diversionary activities against the Red Army." And there the explanation stopped. The United States and United Kingdom said they would have to have more explanation before going further with the Polish negotiations.

If Russia had had the type of press which the United States enjoys, no doubt the whole story would have been on everyone's tongue in twenty-four hours; the sixteen leaders would have been interviewed in their cells, the government lawyers would have filed their charges, and the trial date set. It is just possible that under such a system the whole irritation would have dissolved, and people would have been content to wait for the evidence developed at the trials.

Instead, the sixteen Poles were lost to view again behind the great Russian wall of silence.

It is another example of the dangerous road of differences, due to differing national habits, over which the Allies and the other United Nations will have to travel as they work toward an effective plan for outlawing war.

## HEL—THE FIRST BATAAN OF WORLD WAR II

*(Continued from page 11)*

offshore the German tanks advancing north from Gdynia. And those little giants of the Polish sea lanes, the submarines, gallantly aided the defenders of Hel for the first three weeks of the war. Suffering many an injury in daytime raiding, they were repaired at night and sent back to their assigned duties. When it became apparent that Poland could not stem the tide alone much longer, they were given their freedom. Three made their way to Sweden where they were interned for the duration of the war, while two achieved the remarkable feat of reaching England through German-infested waters without benefit of navigating instruments.

The defense of Hel was an all-out defense in which collective and individual acts of bravery were common occurrences. The Germans kept attacking with fresh, well armed troops, while the Poles hardly slept during the 32-day defense. Always under fire, they snatched a few minutes restless sleep in hastily dug foxholes and subsisted on cold tinned food. Medical treatment was next to impossible under these trying conditions. Mr. Wichura still has a vivid memory of the two Cassubians he saw die on the operating table, crying "Long Live Poland" with their last breath.

The dry underbrush and coniferous growth on Hel often caught fire from the shells and bombs dropping all over the area and an added task of the harassed Poles was to extinguish the flames. The fact that instead of the customary rainy season, ideal weather prevailed, furnished another twist to the grim situation.

All building of bunkers and other fortifications had to be done at night when the enemy bombardment did not slacken, but could not be directed with the same accuracy.

A valiant effort was even made to turn Hel into an island by dynamiting a canal across it, not far from the peninsula's

base. Handicapped by insufficient explosives, the projected canal became a water-filled indentation in the sandy soil.

Why did the defenders of Hel submit to such severe punishment for so many weeks? Mr. Wichura asserts that they were told to hold Hel because of the possibility of English help from the sea. "Besides," he adds, "it was a question of honor."

But by October 2nd it was obvious that English help would not arrive; the heavy Polish losses, complete lack of artillery equipment and the fatigue of the defenders precluded any longer defense. In recognition of the valor of the defenders of Hel, the Germans granted them an honorable capitulation, permitting the officers to keep their side arms. However, as they have done so often in history, the Germans broke this agreement too.

Before the final capitulation, the Poles destroyed all stores and armament on the peninsula, broke up the radio station, dismantled all cannon, exploded whatever grenades were left and tore down the telegraph lines. The Germans objected to this violation of the capitulation terms, but they were reminded of Scapa Flow by a Polish officer and were forced to accept the situation.

On the day of capitulation, hundreds of Poles attempted an escape by sea to Sweden. Only 100 were lucky enough to cross the choppy Baltic. Some 1,500 prisoners, headed by Admiral Jozef Unrug and Commander Stefan Frankowski, set out for close to six years in German camps. But though their bodies grew weak from privation and ill treatment, though many died before they were freed, their spirit remained unconquerable. The memory of their glorious month-long defense served to keep their faith in the future alive and to inspire the people of Poland throughout the long dark years of war and occupation.





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